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DE RUEHMN #0059 0331022
ZNR UUUUU ZZH (CCY ADX02679B0 MSI7783 611)
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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
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UNCLAS MONTEVIDEO 000059

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WHA/BSC FOR DASCHBACH
BRASILIA FOR HUB BRAGHETTA
DEPT FOR OES/OA, EBLOOM, LRHUGHES, RARNAUDO
DEPT PASS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION/OPP FOR KERB, SBORG,
E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHSA](#) [KTIA](#) [EAID](#) [AY](#) [MESUR](#) [UY](#)
SUBJECT: URUGUAY: STRENGTHENING BILATERAL ANTARCTIC
COOPERATION

11. Summary: Starting with the signing of the bilateral Science and Technology Agreement (April 29 2008) and the ensuing U/S Dobriansky visit, the U.S. and Uruguay have deepened relations in the field of Antarctic cooperation. U.S. Antarctic institutions are showing interest in pursuing joint research opportunities and using Uruguay's Artigas Base and vessels. In February, at the invitation of the GOU, U.S. scientists will visit Artigas Base to investigate possibilities for partnerships. Although considered a small player, Uruguay's activity in Antarctic has the capacity to expand substantially, and its hosting of the 2010 Antarctic Treaty Conference will position Uruguay as an important ally in Antarctica. End Summary.

USG Officials visit Artigas Base

12. The Uruguayan Artigas Base, located off of the Antarctic Peninsula on King George's Island, is a small base looking to expand its research capabilities, both in terms of equipment and in scientific know-how. In its efforts to reach out to the USG, the Uruguayan Antarctic Institute (UAI) invited former Ambassador Baxter, OES DAS Jeff Miotke, and Econoff to join a December outreach mission also attended by GOU science policy-makers. The participants noted that the base is in need of equipment both for research and for general logistics on the island. There is also a project underway to develop Uruguay's second territorial holding, a small, "summer base" on the Antarctic Peninsula. Although the UAI is committed to this project, the investment required is significant and funding short. Comment: We expect current UAI president, General Montaldo, to continue working with GOU officials in the scientific arena to develop Uruguay's domestic science and research capacity at its bases. He is especially interested to find ways that joint research activities with the U.S. could benefit the next generation of Uruguay's scientists. End comment.

U.S. Institutions Engage

3) Post contacted over 20 academic and governmental institutions that work on Antarctic issues to probe interest in a Uruguayan relationship. In February, three scientists accepted the UAI invitation to join a research mission on February 21- March 1: Dr. Mahlon Kennicutt, President of the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research, Dr. Joseph McConnell, Desert Research Institute, University of Nevada, and Dr. Joseph Warren, Stony Brook University School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences. Several other institutions indicated interest in investigating relationships with UAI including NOAA and NSF.

4) Post maintains close contact with the UAI and will ensure follow up with interested U.S. institutions, potentially through the venue of the 2009 Antarctic Treaty Meeting in Baltimore. Strong GOU participation in the Antarctic Treaty meeting will set the foundation for a successful conference in 2010, which will be held in Montevideo. Post will also respond to UAI requests to enhance scientific cooperation through speaker and educational exchanges.

5) Comment: Helping to develop the Artigas Base by sending U.S. researchers is a smart way to broaden our influence in Uruguay and a great opportunity for scientific diplomacy in the field of climate change. Post believes that Antarctic cooperation has the potential to be one of the most substantial outcomes from the S & T Agreement. End Comment.
Matthewman